



Pest Detection and Management Programs

Plant Protection and Quarantine

Weekly Notice, February 16, 2004

This "Weekly Notice" is prepared by the Pest Detection and Management Programs (PDMP) to communicate recent important events. These notices and other more detailed program information can be found at:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/reports/>

Asian longhorned beetle - A cross training trip between emergency programs is scheduled in March. The PPQ Technicians from the ALB Program will be visiting the Emerald Ash Program on March 1, 2004, in order to gain field knowledge in surveying for this exotic insect. The expertise they gain in the identification and visual symptoms of Emerald Ash Borer will be utilized when conducting their surveys on Ash trees in Illinois for Asian Longhorned Beetle. The Michigan nurseries were a source in the past for ash trees planted throughout the city.

An ALB Public Outreach Working Group meeting is scheduled for the first week of March in New York. The goal of this meeting is to develop and implement a targeted outreach program for 2004 which will support and enhance the survey and treatment operations of the program. Groups in attendance will be USDA APHIS PPQ, New York State Agriculture and Markets, US Forest Service, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York Department of Parks and Recreation, Nature Conservancy, and Trees New York.

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Emerald ash borer -

Michigan: With public meetings completed, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) program concluded ash tree inventories and began the job of supervising tree removals from the Shields site in Saginaw County, Michigan this week. Approximately 20,000 ash trees are slated for removal. The total cost of these removals was contracted at \$600,000, or approximately \$25.00 per tree.

Saginaw is the first of a series of outlier sites scheduled for eradication activity. The next three will be St.

Clair County (along the St. Clair River adjacent to Canada), St. Joseph in Berrien County, and Wyoming in Kent County, all of which are multi-year sites.

The Department is working to complete the majority of these tree removals before the middle of May, when EAB adults may first emerge from beneath the bark of infested ash trees and start flying and depositing their eggs on new ash trees.

Virginia: On February 23, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), in cooperation with the Fairfax County Forest Pest Program and USDA, will begin ash tree removal in the half mile radius surrounding the Colvin Run Elementary School, the site where 13 ash trees from Michigan were planted last July. A total of approximately 200 ash trees will be removed in order to halt the potential spread of Emerald Ash Borer. It is estimated that these activities will be completed by April 1st.

Only 20 ash trees are located on residential properties, with the remainder to be removed from common areas within the 1/2 mile. VDACS is working with the U. S. Forest Service on a tree replacement plan to defray landscaping costs through a voucher based system in order to replace mature trees that are removed in the area.

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***Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar** - PPQ and State regulatory officials are continuing to hold, destroy and dispose of the three geranium varieties produced at a Guatemalan production facility that are potentially infected with *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2. The eradication action is winding down. All control actions in the Western Region are complete and all held nurseries have been released. Only 43 Eastern Region facilities are currently being held. Nationally, 41 states have a total of 465 suspect facilities, 43 facilities are currently being held, 414 control actions (destruction, disposal and disinfection) are complete, 417 facilities



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have been released, and more than 1.9 million cuttings or plants have been destroyed, as of February 18.

Goldsmith Plants, Inc., the producer of the suspect geraniums, has sent a letter to their customers that questions the scope of APHIS' recent actions to eradicate with *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2, including the decision not to re-certify their Guatemala production facility and the destruction of potentially infected plants in the U.S. The letter has generated several inquiries from growers and the media. Dore Mobley (301-734-7255) of LPA, Riverdale is the point of contact for media inquiries.

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Noxious Weeds - The Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition issued a press release warning consumers that invasive plants are available at local garden centers. The release coincided with the upcoming National Invasive Weed Awareness Week, February 22 – 27, 2004. The coalition is working cooperatively with several groups including the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Invasive Weeds to put together the program for the week. Expected participants are a broad spectrum of state and county weed managers, federal weed managers, and members of various non-governmental organizations.

Highlights of planned activities are:

A Children's Fun Day took place Sunday, February 22, at the U.S. Botanical Garden in Washington. Posters and exhibits highlighting invasive plant problems and management programs will be open to the public at the U.S. Botanic Garden throughout the week. Briefings by various USDA agencies will be held for the participants Tuesday morning February 24, at the Whitten Building. Deputy Secretary Mosley, MRP Under Secretary Hawks, and APHIS Administrator Bobby Acord will be among the speakers. An Interior Department briefing of the participants will occur Wednesday, February 25, 2004.

A full schedule of activities is posted at
http://ficmnew.fws.gov/iwac/niwaw_v/index.html

Arthur Miller, PPQ Eastern Regional Program Manager was inducted as a Fellow of the Weed Science Society of America last week in Kansas City, Missouri. Nominees must be active members of the societies and have been active members for at least 10 years. A maximum of 0.25% of the society membership may be elected to fellowship in a year. Art has worked many of his forty plus years of USDA service in the area of weed science and management and has become one of the leading weed experts in USDA especially in the area of the southern United States. This is a very high honor in the important realm of weed management for agriculture. **Source: John Stewart**

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